GENNDY TARTAKOVSKY

STEPHEN DeSTEFANO • SCOTT WILLS

CAGE!

DIG IT!

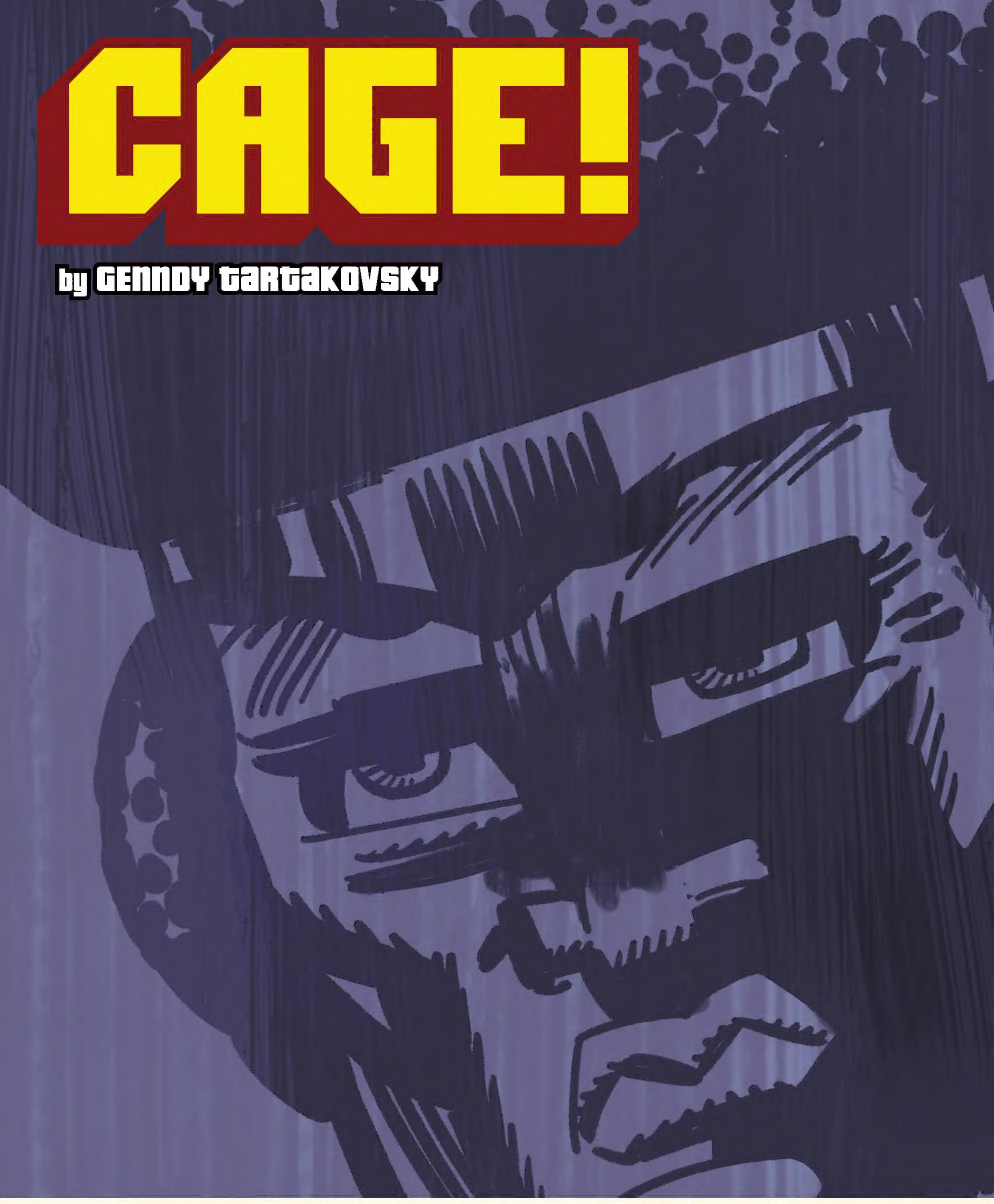
#1

NOW

MARVEL #1

CAGE!

by GENNDY tartakovsky



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1977, NEW YORK.

CITY OF BIG...

BIG BUILDINGS...

BIG SHOES...

BIG SHIRTS...

AND BIG CRIME!

BANK

BOOM!

WOOHOO!!! WE GOT THE LOOT, BOYS! AIN'T NO STOPPING US NOW!

YEAH, BABY, WE'RE ON A *ROLL!*

NO

THE

Bank Rollers

JUST STUCK IT TO ...THE *MAN!*

HEY, MAN, WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?

SHAZAM!

PAIN, BABY... A WHOLE LOTTA PAIN!

DIG IT.

WRONGLY CONVICTED AND SENT TO PRISON.

REBORN IN A **FREAK** EXPERIMENT THAT GAVE HIM **STEEL-HARD** SKIN AND SUPER-STRENGTH.

A MAN WHO HIDES HIS IDENTITY AS AN ESCAPED CON IN THE ROLE OF A HERO FOR HIRE.

HE IS KNOWN ON THE STREETS AS

CAGE!

GRAB

SLAM!

STOMP

SLAP!

OOF!

OOP, TIME FOR ME TA SPLIT...

HEY, LOOK! IT'S CAGE!!

GLAD TO SEE YOU KIDS ARE PLAYING AND STAYING OFF THE STREETS.

AND WHAT A DIFFERENCE THIS BRAND-NEW BALL MAKES.

LET'S CHECK IT OUT!

SLAM

...

WELL, GOTTA GO...

CHINATOWN. 8:10 P.M.

10 MINUTES LATE AS USUAL...

MAN, I HAVEN'T SEEN MISTY KNIGHT IN A LONG TIME. I HOPE SHE WON'T MIND MY USUAL LATENESS.

DING-DANG, BEATIN' UP ON THEM SKATIN' TURKEYS MAKES A BROTHER HUNGRY!

I LOVE ME SOME DIM SUM AND THEN SOME!

MR. CAGE!

MISS MISTY HAS NOT ARRIVED YET, BUT PLEASE LET ME SHOW YOU TO YOUR TABLE.

EVERYTHING OKAY?

GOOD... THANKS, MR. CHOW!

MAN, I HATE SITTING BY MYSELF, FEELS LIKE EVERYONE IS STARING...

WHERE IS SHE?!

YAWN!

NNNN

8:45...CAGE IS RATTLED!

DAMMIT!!!

NOBODY STANDS UP CAGE!

SHE BETTER HAVE A GOOD EXCUSE OR THERE WILL BE... HELL!!!

EAST SIDE POLICE STATION. THE BUSIEST PLACE THIS SIDE OF UNION STATION...BUT TODAY IS SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.

MISTY KNIGHT?!

EMPTY?

RINNNG! RINNNG! RINNNG!

MAN, WHAT IS GOING ON? WHERE ARE ALL THE DAMN *COPS?* SOMETHING JUST AIN'T RIGHT.

DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MISTY HAS BEEN HERE IN A WHILE, EITHER...

TED

HEY, FOOL! SPRING ME AN' I'LL TELL YA WHAT'S UP!

SPILL IT, *RAT.*

UH-UH, BROTHER... NOT UNTIL I'M ON THE FREE SIDE OF DIS IRON CURTAIN.

GAK!

PULL

TALK!!!

ALL THE HEROES AROUND TOWN ARE DISAPPEARING! COPS GOT SUPER BUSY! YOUR GIRLFRIEND SPLIT AT THE SAME TIME, HASN'T BEEN BACK SINCE! THAT'S ALL I KNOW!

HEY, MAN, YOU PROMISED TO LET ME OUT!

I DIDN'T SAY FOR HOW LONG.

NUTS.

I GOTTA CHECK OUT MISTY'S PAD...DON'T NEED NO SPIDER-SENSE TO KNOW SOMETHING *BAD* IS UP!

TAXI

AND CAGE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THE WHOLE STORY, FOR SOME MYSTERIOUS SILHOUETTES HAVE BEEN ON HIS TAIL THE WHOLE DAY.

HOW CAN ALL THE HEROES JUST DISAPPEAR? THIS TOWN'S GOT LOADS OF 'EM. WEB-CRAWLERS, FIRE DUDES, CRAZY MUTANTS...AND WHAT ABOUT A BROTHER WITH SUPER-STRENGTH AND SKIN OF STEEL? WHY HAVEN'T *I* DISAPPEARED? I'M A *HERO*...SOMEBODY'S GOT SOME EXPLAINING TO DO!

HMMM... LIGHT'S ON, LET'S SEE WHO'S HOME.

MISTY?

WHERE IS JEAN GREY?!!!

BOOM!

ROLL

JEAN GREY?! SHE MOVED OUT MONTHS AGO!

LIAR!!

SCOTT!!! JEAN'S GONE! SHE'S GONE!*

ACH DU LIEBER!

*JEAN GREY BECAME THE **DARK PHOENIX** AND WAS DESTROYED IN THE LAST EXCITING ISSUE OF X-MEN, #137.--'70S TOM

WHAT HAVE I DONE?

OOPS.

IT JUST DID!

MAN, CAN THIS DAY GET ANY WORSE?

39

CRASH

COURTESY OF... THE X

CHEMISTRO

MAKE!

BLACK MARIAH

AND

MR. FISH!

DAMN! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU ALL GOT TOGETHER AND FORMED A FAN CLUB...

NOT QUITE, *FOOL!* WE'VE GATHERED FOR YOUR FUNERAL!

ALL THE HEROES HAVE DISAPPEARED EXCEPT YOU...

...SO WE DECIDED TO FINISH THE JOB.

METER'S RUNNING, YA BETTER GET ON WITH IT!

CLANG!

DANG, CAGE! SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA KEEP YOUR TRAP SHUT!

IMPACT! TEETH SCRAPE, JAW BUCKLES, A BLOW THAT WOULD TAKE DOWN AN ELEPHANT...BUT CAGE IS UNLIKE AN ELEPHANT, THE PUNCH ONLY BRUISES HIS **EGO**...

KRAK

ORF!

PTOW!

TOO MANY OF 'EM...GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE. FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.

WHAT WAS THAT?

OH, LORD! THAT IS ONE BIG **MESS'A** FEMALE!

KABOOM!

GRAVITY HURTS, SUCKA!!!

SO DOES EXERCISE!

LIFT

AAAAAAGH!

KA-BOOM!

I NEED A *RIDE* OUTTA THIS MESS!

SEE YA, *SUCKER!*

INC.

MAN, AM I GLAD TO GET RID OF THOSE DUDES!

SWEET CHRISTMAS! NOW WHAT?!

SOK

BEFORE CAGE HAS A CHANCE TO REGISTER THE HORRIFIC FACE OF HIS FOE...A DEVASTATING BLOW IS DELIVERED THAT KNOCKS HIM OUT!

KNOCKED OUT??!!

WHAT ON EARTH IS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO KNOCK OUT **CAGE**?!

I DON'T KNOW, BUT I'M SURE WE WILL FIND OUT IN THE NEXT **TANTALIZING** ISSUE OF **CAGE!**

DON'T MISS IT!!

NEXT:

CAGE!

ZONE